

**LB 422**  
**Health and Human Services Committee**  
**February 8, 2012**

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Good afternoon, Senator Campbell and members of the Health and Human Services Committee. My name is Dr. Joseph Acierno (J-O-S-E-P-H-A-C-I-E-R-N-O), Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. I am testifying in a neutral capacity. We believe that licensing procedures should be clear and non-cumbersome for everyone, including military persons. However, we have some technical concerns.

The technical concerns with this bill are as follows:

1. The language requires boards to evaluate the ability of spouses of veterans and spouses of active military personnel to meet the requirements for a Nebraska credential using training and experience obtained in other jurisdictions. Boards do not have the expertise or resources to perform such evaluations. Instead, Nebraska's boards, like those of other states, rely on entities that have invested in the resources and expertise to create valid and reliable tools to conduct equivalency evaluation of training or educational programs. The following are examples of such entities when training and education was completed in a foreign country:
  - a. Equivalency evaluation for medical training obtained in foreign countries is done by the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates.
  - b. For nursing, the equivalency evaluation is done by the Commission on Graduates for Foreign Nursing Schools.
  - c. For physical therapy, the equivalency evaluation is done by several organizations which are specified in the regulations, one of which is the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy Coursework Evaluation Tool for Foreign Educated Physical Therapists.

If the training or educations was completed in the United States, equivalency evaluation, typically, is not an issue since Nebraska, like many other States, has adopted the same educational standards and the same examination, with some exceptions. For example, the educational hours a cosmetologist license or a massage therapist license may differ from State to State for a variety of reasons. We know that the 1,000 hours required in Nebraska for a massage therapist license is higher than many other States.

2. The language authorizes the department to issue a temporary practice permit to spouses of veterans and spouses of active military personnel licensed, certified, or registered in another jurisdiction while they are satisfying the requirements for a

Nebraska license. This language is not needed since authorization to issue temporary licenses exist in currently effective statutes.

In closing, I wish to reiterate our willingness to work with the introducing senator and entities to address any perceived barriers to licensure of spouses of veterans and spouses of active duty military personnel.

Please also refer to the Department's testimony on LB421 for our other comments.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments today. I would be happy to respond to any questions.